



Member news

promoting the value of play

Autumn 2019 :: Issue 05



Executive Director's message

April/May is always a busy time for us with meetings and forums happening across the country in the promotion of play.

We at Play Australia have been working to facilitate the transformation of Play Australia into a truly national organization to accurately reflect our membership base, and provide services and support to our members, and to promote and advocate for the development of play across all of Australia.

Play Australia has been in operation for 105 years, responding to the changing needs within the many industry sectors involved in play. Our aim is to provide a national profile for play, and to be recognized as the national peak advocacy organisation for play. Members nationally support this development, and we now have an established Branch in SA and WA, and plan on establishing a Branch in NSW and QLD during 2019.

Issues front of mind currently across the country concern the problems inherent in children playing on play equipment when it is too hot to do so. Given our climatic conditions in Australia this is an issue which will continue to be problematic and connected to this concern is the apparent lack of adequate supervision of young children in some instances. Members are regularly expressing frustration in having to deal with this issue at a council level. Playground Standards clearly state that the supervision of young children is the responsibility of adults and carers. Councils are responsible for the management of the infrastructure but not the behaviour of those who use it.

Work is underway to create a ranking system supposedly to assist parents in their choice of outdoor playspaces on hot days.

www.ausleisure.com.au/news/western-sydney-university-scientist-creates-rating-for-playground-performance-safety-and-temperatures

I have some concern about measures such as this, when a strong dose of common sense is what is required. Are we going to establish similar measures for sand which gets hot on the beach, or footpaths which are hot in our neighborhoods?

We need to encourage parents and carers to understand that the health and well-being of their children will be greatly enhanced if they engage with their children in outdoor play. It is this message that we need to strenuously advocate in 2019. Play Australia has developed an excellent resource titled Play Today which all members are encouraged to check out on line at www.playaustralia.org.au where material is available to download or hard copies can be requested from barb@playaustralia.org.au

Please feel able to use this material in whatever way suits your workplace and/or environment.

Play Australia E-News will commence shortly and will be used to deliver current news and information to our members and key stakeholders to further support our advocacy of play across Australia.

Barbara Champion



Play Australia Training in 2019

All programs will be held at Westerfolds Park, Templestowe.

Please register on line and contact Barb at barb@playaustralia.org.au for further information.

July Wed 17 and Thurs 18
Bookings open now

August Wed 28 and Thurs 29
Bookings open now

November Wed 13 and Thurs 14
Bookings open now

Play Australia WA has events planned for 2019 and further information is available from Kerry at play.wa@playaustralia.org.au

Planning is underway for a 1 Day program in Adelaide on Standards related issues and a 1 Day Seminar on Designing for Play in Queensland to be held in Brisbane.

The Local Government Play Network in Victoria met recently and discussed Designing for Effective Maintenance which was attended by 90+ and was an outstanding success. Members presented and contributed to a most productive discussion and we will consider running a similar session throughout the country and invite AILA and PLA members to participate.

www For more information, or to book online, visit www.playaustralia.org.au

Who is the IPA?

The International Play Association (or IPA) is a non-governmental organisation that was founded in 1961.

The IPA's purpose is to protect, preserve and promote the child's right to play as a fundamental human right (Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child). With almost 50 countries and active groups in many of those countries (including Australia) it provides a forum for exchange and action across disciplines and sectors.

As well as holding a Triennial World Conference, the IPA National Member Groups (such as Play Australia) initiate a wide variety of projects that promote the child's right to play. These include; seminars conferences, study tours, research, publications, playground design, playwork training and the organisation of play programs and play days.

IPA News

IPA Conference 2020 – Jaipur India

Following a very successful conference in Calgary, Canada in 2017, International Play Association members will once again gather from all over the world next year again this time in Jaipur, India in November 2020 (dates to follow). The first call for submissions will go out in April and registrations will open in October 2019.

Not only is this a chance to visit one of the unique corners of the globe, but its also an opportunity to participate in the largest international event in terms of networking, sharing and education in the play sector and we would encourage Play Australia Members to participate.

www For more information and to sign up for notifications regarding the conference and the submission of papers for presentation visit: www.ipaworld.org

Play Australia Life Members 2018

We would like to congratulate our most recent life members for their dedicated service to the promotion of play in Australia.

The 2018 awards focused on those in our sector who are or have been in the 'front line' of playspace management: **Ray Hutchison (VIC), Jason Hutchinson (VIC), Rob Hamilton (VIC), Brendan Lange (VIC), Mark Dornau (VIC), Andrew Reedy (WA), Jason Hocking (VIC).**

Joan Matheson Distinguished Service Award 2018

The Joan Matheson Award is given each year to an individual who has made a significant contribution to the development, promotion and advocacy of play in Australia. It is awarded in memory of Joan Matheson, an exceptional woman who made a life-long contribution to the development of Play Australia.

The 2018 award recipient is **Robyn Monro Miller**. Robyn is a former child with 48 years experience in the world of play. The highlight of her play career being the building of unsafe structures in trees and spying on her neighbours.

In her adult life she has resorted to working in the field of school age care to reclaim some of the magic of those early years, leading her to her current role as CEO of 'Kids Giving Back' a visionary organisation based in Sydney developing volunteering as a two-way street. KGB supports young people to volunteer and by doing so develop respect, resilience, and leadership skills, as well as the ability and opportunity to positively engage in the wider community.

Robyn has qualifications in education, children's services, community management, and training and workplace assessment. She is a frequent guest speaker at conferences and seminars across Australia and internationally as well as a spokesperson on children's issues in the national media.

A member of the International Play Association since attending her first IPA conference in Melbourne in 1993, Robyn was formally co-opted to the position of Vice President of the International Play Association in 2012. In taking on the role of President in 2017, Robyn became the first Australian to hold that position in the 56-year history of the International Play Association.



Robyn Monro Miller

Play Warrior Award 2018

It was felt that in addition to our annual service awards Play Australia would like to occasionally honour individuals who have worked tirelessly (particularly in the face of adversity) to promote and advocate for play.

The inaugural recipient of the Play Warrior Award is **Wendy Seymour**. Wendy, who sadly passed away in October 2016 was a gifted, skillful designer of many innovative playspaces in Western Australia, design underpinned by years of research and study and time spent keenly observing children's play.

A fearless supporter and advocate for children to have access to quality play opportunities, Wendy had particular interest and experience in designing for access and inclusion. She was invited to participate in and present to the Guiding Committee for a project to develop national Inclusive Play Guidelines (funded by Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs) in 2012 in Canberra.

She presented at national and international conferences and participated in interstate and overseas study tours relating to play. She is also a multiple design award winner, having received National Local Government Awards and Parks & Leisure State and National Awards for project work undertaken with the City of Swan and Nature Play Solutions.



Wendy Seymour

Reminder to all Members

So we can keep our database up to date for information and event invites could you please let us know the names and email addresses of any new staff colleagues in your organisation.
[@barb@playaustralia.org.au](mailto:barb@playaustralia.org.au)

Reflections on Play

Robyn Monro Miller reflects on advocacy for children's play and how this may be shaping an experience of play that is neither authentic or natural and if not addressed will have serious implications for our children.

On the surface, advocacy for a child's right to play looks to be making an impact. Early success has been achieved in the community with a heightened awareness of the importance of play.

The word PLAY is making its way into daily conversation and the creation of new and varied play experiences is evident across the community. However, the fervour being generated by this new interest is a two edged sword which has the potential to destroy the very features of play that make it so important for children.

We are witnessing a disturbing trend accompanying this play revolution via a strong undercurrent of adult directed, controlled and manipulated play experiences. Play in this new climate has ambitious well-meaning adults, flocking to create 'play' opportunities for children.

Much of this fervour can be attributed to our own attempts to legitimise play by linking its importance to the development of educational outcomes and attainment. We do play a disservice when we allow it to be promoted and advocated for as a strategy for learning rather than a strategy for survival.

Learning is a by-product of Play. Play if seen as simply a strategy for academic success rather than an essential process for healthy human development makes play optional or at worst redundant. Children can and will become literate and numerate without having engaged in play. Children can play and not become literate or numerate. The argument that play is essential for academic success can be quickly lost. We know this as we have a number of countries across the world providing evidence through their education systems most of whom have no agenda for play on their curriculum.

Play in Australia has now become embedded into learning programs and structured experiences. 'Play based learning' is now standard practice across many children's services and programs. This is wonderful, but this is not play. This is play based learning and there is much confusion between the two amongst those not familiar with either.

There are many examples of play becoming hijacked by this process of gentrification resulting in play becoming lost in the new

reality of marketing and consumerism, riding on the desires of parents to do the best for their child.

We have parents now proudly displaying their acquisitions of loose parts for their child's play and then seeking assistance for ideas to categorise and sort them for their child. The understanding of how and why loose parts are important has been lost in that environment like so many other concepts around play. We have advocated and not educated. Delivered a message and not captured the concept. In effect, we now have situations of adults controlling some play environments to such an extent that it 'sanitises' play removing challenge, spontaneity, risk and exploration. What we are seeing in many instances is a range of simulated play experiences that provide none of the inherent benefits to the child that play is designed to do.

This hijacking and creation of artificial play experiences will only serve to increase play deprivation in our community and exacerbate the decline of play.

Play is spontaneous and does not have a set outcome. Play is intrinsically motivated by the child. The key role adults have when it comes to play is to provide sufficient time for it to occur, space for it to develop, and reassurance that the play belongs to the child and is important.

Play is free, play is simple and play has capacity to resource itself though the child's own imagination, exploration and invention. Most importantly, Play is a biological imperative.

As advocates, we now need to take it back to basics and deliver those messages.

Play is undertaken by all advanced species in the animal kingdom. Play is undertaken by the young in many species with advanced social structures, proof that this biological imperative for play exists. Most recently it has been discovered that even the reptilian brain of crocodiles has capacity for play. The process of play has a deep evolutionary role in the developing brain and provides multifunctional benefits for brain and motor skill development. Studies show that during

play the neocortex of the brain is activated with almost one third of genes changed after 30 mins of play. Play builds new circuits in the prefrontal cortex of the brain. The prefrontal cortex controls our executive functions. This relates to the regulation of emotions, problem solving and the navigation of complex social interactions. Play supports development of adaptability as it the spontaneity of play that supports the brain to train for the unexpected. This coupled with the release of hormones that reduce stress, links play to increasing a child's resilience and serves an important role in maintenance of good health.

It is time to take our advocacy to the next level and educate our community on the nature and importance of authentic play and how we protect, promote and provide for it.

Investment in play should be a national priority for health and wellbeing and building strong connected communities. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity'. More recently, positive mental health was defined by WHO as being 'a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community'. These elements are all achieved during play.

Play ensures children thrive rather than just exist. Play sits within the animal kingdom alongside nutrition and caregiving and should have the same recognition in our community.

There are a number of things in a child's life that are optional.

Play is not one of them.

Robyn Monro Miller is the CEO of Kids Giving Back a charity organisation that aims to both support young people to participate in their communities and assist with community volunteering. She is also the current International Play Association World President and Play Australia's 2018 Joan Matheson Award Recipient. Senior Lecturer, Early Childhood Education, Deakin University

Community Connections



By Kerry Logan, Outdoor Play Consultant, Nature Play Solutions; Leadership Council, International School Grounds Alliance.

I am always excited to head off to an International School Grounds Alliance (ISGA) Conference: to catch up with old friends; meet new people; share stories of success or frustration; delve into a new culture; and re-energise. The most recent ISGA Conference held last November in Yokohama, Japan, didn't disappoint.

The program included a terrific range of tours, presentations and hands-on workshops. As well as the tours and local presenters, there were speakers from Brazil, Canada, Finland, Sweden, UK and USA, including the inspiring Dr Susan Humphries, former Head Teacher of the Coombes School, UK and a moving video presentation from Dr Tony Kendle, Eden Project International, UK.

However, as with previous conferences, it is the opportunity to gain an insight into the host country's culture and approach to developing and managing school grounds that is the most satisfying. This conference also focused on two of my particular passions - schools' connection with their local neighbourhoods and the Japanese approach to children's risky play.

All of the visits and presentations demonstrated Japan's deep cultural connection to the physical, community and cultural landscape, particularly around the dietary staple - rice. Children were involved in hands-on learning about sowing, planting, growing, harvesting, processing and eating! I also learned new ways of talking about these connections.

School Principal Shin-ich Onoue, told his story of making "Satoyama" at his school - making his school a homeland for kids - that resulted in children's wild spirit coming back; and parents and other community members noticing the positive changes, becoming supporters and taking this spirit back into their own homes.

Several speakers shared stories of "Machi-Hoiku" - a concept of place-based practice that focuses on creating and developing children's connections with the physical and cultural aspects of their local communities.

Dr Norie Miwa, Assoc Professor, Yokohama City University, supported a number of child care centres to take children on walks around their local neighbourhoods. The walks unlocked many now highly valued community connections for the children (and members of their community), which were articulated in 'Walking Maps' that highlighted points of interest and connection for children - local parks, neighbours, characters, special places, etc.

Ryuichi Sekiyama, Moana Kids Outdoor Education School & Maple Kids Forest Kindergarten shared his belief that local communities are "longing for goodness" and highlighted the value of paying attention to and realising local resources.

And Koryo Saito, Small Alley Child Care & Learning Centre, also shared wonderful stories of his centre's walking tours of their local areas and a great quote - "It is the relationship with people and place that grows children.

The conference theme - The Value of School Grounds for Children: Learning from Towns and the World - spoke to my belief that schools are children's 'home' for many years and best support children when they are rich, nurturing environments; and they know their neighbours.

The changes in Western societies over recent decades that have restricted children's freedom to roam and explore their neighbourhoods and reduced opportunities to develop important life skills, can in some way be ameliorated when schools take time to break out of the confines of their grounds and explore and connect with the people and places around them.

During the post-conference Leadership Council Retreat, many of us shared similar 'take home' messages from the conference:

- it takes a village to raise a child; and that
- it is also true that it takes a child to raise a village.

The next ISGA Conference will be held in Scotland in 2020 with the theme – Addressing the Challenges We Face and Celebrating Success.

Talking about the Science of Parenting

In this issue we will examine recent research undertaken by the Frameworks Institute on 'Talking about the Science of Parenting'.

The evidence is clear that improving child development requires better support for parents and care-givers. Research such as this has the potential to deepen public knowledge, drive better practice and contribute to greater well-being for all Australians. The research is about framing and language and how this is key to the effectiveness of evidence based message and advice. How taking a *Child Development narrative (Focusing on what's good for children)* over a *Parenting effectiveness narrative (Focusing on parent's behaviour)* can win hearts and minds.

As children and their families are the main clients for many of us in the play sector, some of the following ideas may be of use to you in your professional work, particularly if you are working directly with families:

Better Communication with Parents on Play

The big idea on any issue is what we say its really about. Why an issue matters and what's at stake if we do nothing. By using the third person, not asserting the 'moral' high-ground and merely establishing our shared grounds for action we can re-inforce what we mean through our content.

Below are eight ways the Frameworks Institute recommends talking about parenting:

1. Start with children and what they need to thrive
2. Build a better understanding of child development to engage and shift public thinking
3. Show how children's skills and abilities develop through active process and what families need to support that process
4. Avoid prompting any judgement of parenting
5. Show the impact of 'context' on parents
6. Focus on parenting skills only after establishing the role of 'context'
7. Avoid rebutting or disproving ingrained ways of thinking about parenting
8. Avoid normalising parent's struggles

A good example of this in our professional context might be:

Before

Parents today don't seem to understand the value of unstructured, free-play, therefore children often suffer from being over directed or controlled in their daily lives. This limits children's time for relaxation, independence and imagination, causing frustration and sometimes anger.

After

In a busy day, children need a balance of routine with time and space to play freely. Even a small amount of time each day for relaxation, independence and imagination will contribute to healthy development and better wellbeing for the whole family.

www For a deeper insight into this research and the toolkit developed by the Frameworks Institute visit www.frameworksinstitute.org/australia-parenting.html



International School Grounds Alliance (ISGA)

Formed in 2011, the ISGA is a global network of organisations and professionals working to enrich children's learning and play by improving the way school grounds are designed and used.

ISGA believes that school grounds are crucial childhood landscapes. Located in almost every neighborhood, town and city around the world, for many children they are the primary place they play outside: and helps to shape who they are.

The ISGA believes that school grounds should:

- provide powerful opportunities for hands-on learning
- nurture students' physical, social and emotional development and wellbeing
- reflect and embrace their local ecological, social and cultural context
- embrace risk-taking as an essential component of learning and child development
- be open public spaces, accessible to their communities

www For more information visit www.internationalschoolgrounds.org



Play Today *campaign*

Funded by Sport & Recreation Victoria, Play Australia's Play Today Campaign, is a series of five A4 information sheets and a printed brochure that discuss the critical influence of play on children's well-being. These sheets can be downloaded and printed for distribution by all who work with or care for children. Printed brochures will also be distributed to Play Australia's strategic partners.

Play Today examines the positive impacts of play on Health, the Balance of Risk-Taking & Safety, Community, Learning and Time & Space. This material not only seeks to inform and influence adults by providing current facts, outlining challenges faced, but also suggests actions to improve daily play opportunities for all children in Australia.

Written in a straight-forward easy to digest manner, we hope that this material will have a wide ranging audience and impact.

[www](http://www.playaustralia.org.au/play-today) For further information and to download these pages visit www.playaustralia.org.au/play-today

2018 Play Australia Online Annual General Meeting

Play Australia's Annual General Meeting was held online for the first time ever on Wednesday 22nd November. Attended by many members from around Australia beaming in from their home states, we overcame a few technical hitches to participate in what was a lively session. Play Australia feels that this is a significant step forward in terms of the nationalizing of our organization.



Play Australia has established a Play Australia membership recognition program to acknowledge and congratulate members for outstanding achievement and excellence in their field of work in the promotion of the value of play.

The Promoting the Value of Play Recognition Program will celebrate people and projects that enhance the outdoor play experience for children, families and communities; and will develop the Play Australia website as the 'go to' place to see innovative play activities and initiatives, and play spaces which support the right to play for all children in Australia.

The Recognition Program is intended to be non-competitive, as judging is **only** against the selection criteria provided. There is also no cost for submission.

Do You Have A Project that is Eligible for Nomination?

Examples of suitable projects for nomination might include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Community engagement activities / programs that promote play;
- A tool or resource developed to promote play;
- Strategic Planning for new play opportunities/programs;
- An event or project that promoted the value of play;
- Spaces and places made available for play;
- A person(s) or organisation who have made a significant ongoing contribution to promoting the value of play.

Nominations for the Recognition Program must be submitted by individual Play Australia members or member organisations. Nominations will be received throughout the year and there will be no limit on the number of awards issued annually.

All awarded projects will not only be displayed on a dedicated page of the Play Australia website, but will feature in other Play Australia member forums.

Considering Projects for Award?

Play Australia has appointed a dedicated Recognition Committee that will be responsible for the review of applications 4 times a year and make recommendations to the National Board. This committee is made up of industry, sector representative and young people.

Nomination Selection Criteria

Nomination applications need to identify and demonstrate details around the project including:

- Where and when the activity or project occurred;
- Target audience is and how they have been successfully reached;
- Influences of a rationale and guiding principles;
- The play value for children, both envisaged and actual;
- An assessment of the participation of children and other key users;
- Project delivery, partners, stakeholders and contributors involved;
- Budget and other funding sources utilized and planning for ongoing costs (if required);
- An endorsement of all project partners (signed authorisation if nominating a third party); and,
- An evaluation of the project or activity and how it will be monitored into the future (if required).

Nominations **will not** be considered either for projects that are more than 2 years old at completion or that are for a commercial product or service on their own.

Further information can be requested from Executive Director, Barb Champion at barb@playaustralia.org.au or Renae Churches at renae@playaustralia.org.au

Nominations are now open, and will be considered by the Play Recognition Committee in June/July.

www **To nominate or for further information visit www.playaustralia.org.au/recognition**



Schools need more time for play, not less

Part One: Why play and play areas in schools are so important

Historically schools in Australia have understood the importance of outdoor play for children throughout the years, but unfortunately this is no longer the case.

In Australia, as in many other parts of the world, the majority of children live over protected lives. Their opportunities for free, unsupervised play are minimal and risk taking during play is largely “squashed” by adults. The reasons for this situation are the same here as in many other places, a fear that children will be injured, a fear that they are vulnerable and an adult population who doesn’t remember that risk taking was an important element of their own childhood play. Today many adults have forgotten that children are capable problem solvers who need chances to try. There are also numerous reports available concerning the poor health of so many of our young people in Australia.

The importance of play in schools

Play has an important role in human development and thus the provision of quality play opportunities is an integral part of a good learning environment.

- interact socially;
- engage in dramatic play, role play and fantasy;
- extend their creativity and imagination;
- test themselves physically, developing skills and mastery over physical challenges;
- develop ball handling and other skills;
- observe the natural environment, and engage in a range of self directed activities which aid each individual to develop towards independent adulthood.

The importance of the outdoor play area

School grounds that provide a satisfying range of settings for play for students of different ages and interests are likely to reduce the number of conflicts.

Students are likely to be easier to manage; vandalism is likely to be reduced and the positive spin-offs include benefits to the student’s self image and to the image of the school in general. A quality range of outdoor settings often also provides opportunities for staff to transfer some activities out of doors.

Students have a variety of interests and will want to play in different ways at different times. Consequently schools should provide a range of types of play spaces.

Students tend to utilize all of the grounds for their play (excluding the areas, which are out of bounds). Schools therefore need to consider the ‘package’ offered by all of the outdoor spaces when planning play areas.

“Children are becoming less active and more sedentary and this has to change” (Vic Health report Active for Life, 2014)

Play needs in schools

Play spaces will typically involve combinations of:

- large areas of hard surfaces (for a range of ball games, rebound walls, etc.);
- smaller hard surfaced areas for hop-scotch, elastics and other small group games;
- large grassed area for running, ball games, athletics and other activities;
- play equipment for different aged students, catering for potentially large groups of students at any one time and providing a range of types of activities;
- small spaces with seating for individuals and small groups;
- smaller grassed areas for a variety of activities requiring intimate spaces;

- sand play areas, dirt, water and planting for creative activities;
- areas suitable for marbles, small cars and toys, digging, and play with loose materials and surfaces;
- areas for dramatic /role play which might include decks, cubbies and planting;
- shade and shelter, drinking water and other utilities;
- shrubs and trees for hiding, shelter, imaginative games;
- tables and seats for a range of group activities;
- gathering spaces for assemblies, performances and community activities, and,
- quiet spaces as well as busy spaces.

Areas around buildings such as steps and stairs, doorways, and garden beds are valued play areas and will be appropriated by students for a range of activities. They should be considered when assessing the range of activities available.

Because schools may have limited space, most areas need to be as multi-functional as possible to enable the best value to be obtained out of each part of the grounds. Schools need to consider all spaces within the grounds, which are utilized by students, taking into account both safety and the play activities which they provide.

In Part 2 of this paper (which will be published in our next issue) Barb will talk further on play and safety in schools.

Barbara Champion is the Executive Director of Play Australia and prior to this position she worked in the Education and Local Government sectors in Victoria. Her experience includes leadership and /or involvement in a number of community based education, arts and health organizations.

Members Corner

Our place for information and profiles on Play Australia Members and Membership

Member Profile

Elizabeth Cummins



Elizabeth Cummins

Liz Cummins is a practicing landscape architect and author.

A qualified early years educator, her work focuses on design and planning for play. She is a co-author of 'Getting the Balance Right', Play Australia's guide to Risk Management and writes, presents and trains on the use of risk-benefit assessment as a tool for play provision.

She is also a co-editor of 'How to Grow a Playspace; Design and Development' and currently edits Play Australia's 'Member News'. She has been a National Board Member of Play Australia since 2016.

Tell us briefly about yourself

My interest in play began like many in my pre-school years. With a childhood of adventures and freedom, and a fabulous pre-school teacher it was inevitable that I would end up in education. After travelling and living overseas, I found myself back at university in the later 90's taking on a new challenge studying landscape architecture. My good fortune, was to work in Mary Jeavon's office where I learnt SO much more about play and play environments! My dual professions now mean I design, write, research and present on play. I'm also a keen advocate for play.

What prompted you to become a member of Play Australia?

I initially joined Play Australia whilst working in local government, finding the Local Government Play Network Meetings highly valuable and inspiring. Now as an independent practitioner and passionate advocate for children's play - Play Australia membership is essential to connect to all the great work happening around the country and overseas.

Is there a highlight achieved within your work that you could share regarding an innovation for children's outdoor play experiences?

The publishing of Play Australia's 'Getting the Balance Right; A Guide to Risk Management in Playspaces' in 2015 is the one that comes to mind. Contributing to this guide with Andrew Reedy allowed us to highlight the need for a more balanced approach to safety and play value in playspaces. In the years that have since passed I have been so pleased

to see this thinking gain much greater momentum in local government, education and in the media.

How does Play Australia support you as a member?

Play Australia connects so many of us in the play sector, not just across professions, but now also nationally. We're all working to the same end - that is providing better quality opportunities for children to play and membership to Play Australia means we can share our ideas and issues collectively.

Why is it important for you to work in the play sector?

The play sector is the foundation for supporting children and their families as they grow up. If our future world isn't our most important investment - I don't know what is? From early years, to school to public open space and our local neighbourhoods, all of us in the play sector contribute so much to enriching children's lives. What could be more important than that?

Board News

The Board of Play Australia continues to meet monthly and provides great support and inspiration to the organisation. We wish to give particular thanks to Amanda Balmer of WAX Design in Adelaide, who has recently retired from the Board, and the Committee of Play Australia SA. Amanda has been a fantastic Board member for 3 years, and has worked hard to promote greater play opportunities in SA and support the development of Play Australia into a truly national organisation. Thanks Amanda, we shall miss you 'on line' at Board meetings but we look forward to our continued friendship and play relationship, albeit less frequently.

Got Something to Share on Play?

We'd like to make our Members News a little more interactive. As such we'd like to hear from you on themes and ideas for future editions to pass on to our editorial team. If you have something you'd like to share please email newsletter@playaustralia.org.au



promoting the value of play

Play Australia

ABN 5401 5468 405

PO Box 2060
North Melbourne 3051
Telephone 0419 363 666
info@PlayAustralia.org.au

For more information on membership services, resources, news and events, or to contact Play Australia, please visit PlayAustralia.org.au